

INDIANA • 2015-2016

WATERFOWL

Seasons & Regulations

DNR

Indiana Department
of Natural Resources



**Division of
Fish and Wildlife**

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This summary of waterfowl hunting regulations is designed as a service to hunters and is not intended to be a complete digest of all hunting regulations. For specific details, consult the current issue of the code of federal regulations as published in the Federal Register (Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 20 and 21). These dates are subject to approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As of this printing (Aug. 2015), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has not approved these dates. The federal agency will review these dates by late September. Contact the Indiana DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife for information.

This program receives federal aid in wildlife restoration. Under Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the U.S. Department of Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin or handicap. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility or if you desire further information, please write to: Office for Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

SPECIES & SEASON DATES

Canada Geese, White-fronted Geese, Light Geese, and Brant

North Zone	Oct. 24 - Nov. 22	Dec. 12 - Jan. 24
Central Zone	Oct. 31 - Nov. 8	Nov. 21 - Jan. 24
South Zone	Oct. 31 - Nov. 8	Nov. 28 - Jan. 31

Ducks, Coots, Mergansers

North Zone	Oct. 24 - Dec. 13	Dec. 19 - Dec. 27
Central Zone	Oct. 31 - Nov. 8	Nov. 21 - Jan. 10
South Zone	Oct. 31 - Nov. 8	Nov. 28 - Jan. 17

Youth Waterfowl Hunting Weekends

North Zone	Oct. 17 - Oct. 18
Central Zone	Oct. 24 - Oct. 25
South Zone	Oct. 24 - Oct. 25

Late Canada Goose Zone Season

Feb. 1-15. See zones on page 2 for counties.

DAILY BAG & POSSESSION LIMITS

Ducks

The daily bag limit for ducks is six. This includes any combination of goldeneyes, ruddy ducks, ring-necked ducks, buffleheads, gadwalls, long-tailed ducks, scoters, teal, wigeon and shovellers. Included in the daily limit of six are additional restrictions on the following:

Mallards (not more than two females)	4
Scaup	3
Wood ducks	3
Pintails	2
Redheads	2
Canvasback	2
Black ducks	1
Mottled ducks	1

Coots

The daily bag limit for coots is 15.

Geese

The daily bag limit for dark geese (Canada, white-fronted, and brand) is five, including not more than three Canada geese.

The daily bag limit for light geese (snow, blue, and Ross') is 20.

Mergansers

The daily bag limit for mergansers (which is separate from the duck limit) is five, including not more than two hooded mergansers.

Possession Limits

The possession limit for ducks, coots and mergansers is three times the daily bag limit.

The possession limit for Canada geese, white-fronted geese and brant is three times the daily bag limit. There is no possession limit for light geese.

Don't
Forget **HIP**
Registration

ONLINE

HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES
IndianaOutdoor.IN.gov

2015-2016 INDIANA WATERFOWL SEASONS

Ducks

Waterfowl breeding habitat in the Canadian prairies was variable this year, but averaged good to fair. The U.S. prairies were largely fair to poor. Both were much drier this year than last. Habitat in eastern Canada was also variable, but good on average.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates the mallard breeding population at record 11.6 million, a little higher than last year and 51% over the long-term average. The total duck population, 49.2 million, was similar to the 2014 number. All dabbling ducks except pintails remain above their long-term averages.

Geese

Spring arrived at Hudson Bay on time this year. Breeding-population estimates for the two long-distance migrant populations of Canada geese that use Indiana (the Southern James Bay and Mississippi Valley populations) decreased from 2014. As of this printing, production is unknown, though early work on MVP range indicated average production.

The Mississippi Flyway population of giant Canada geese increased this year after a three-year decline. Breeding conditions in the flyway were above average, with some localized flooding. In Indiana, spring conditions were better than they have been for several years, and there was an increase in breeding geese for the first time in four years. In addition, production seems to have been very good. The fall Canada goose hunting outlook in Indiana is good.

Late Canada Goose Zone Season

Indiana is offering a late season for Canada geese in 2015-2016. This late season targets urban geese that are forced out of towns and cities to feed as the weather gets colder. The season runs from Feb. 1-15, 2016, in the counties listed to the right.

The bag limit is three Canada geese per day (possession limit 9). Hunting hours, regulations and license requirements are the same as for the regular season. Shooting times may vary at some DNR properties. Check property regulations before hunting.

LIGHT GOOSE CONSERVATION ORDER

Light geese (snow geese and Ross' geese) may be taken Feb. 1-March 31, 2016, except in the Late Canada Goose zone, where dates are Feb. 16- March 31, 2016.

The following rules apply:

- Hunting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. Shooting hours may vary at some DNR properties. Check property regulations before hunting.
- The shell capacity limit rule and the use of electronic calling devices restrictions do not apply.
- There is no bag or possession limit.
- A HIP registration number is not required, nor is a Federal duck stamp.
- A free permit is required, available at hunting.IN.gov/3570.htm, after Dec. 1.

ZONES

North Zone

That part of Indiana north of a line extending east from the Illinois border along State Road 18 to U.S. 31; north along U.S. 31 to U.S. 24; east along U.S. 24 to Huntington; southeast along U.S. 224; south along State Road 5; and east along State Road 124 to the Ohio border.

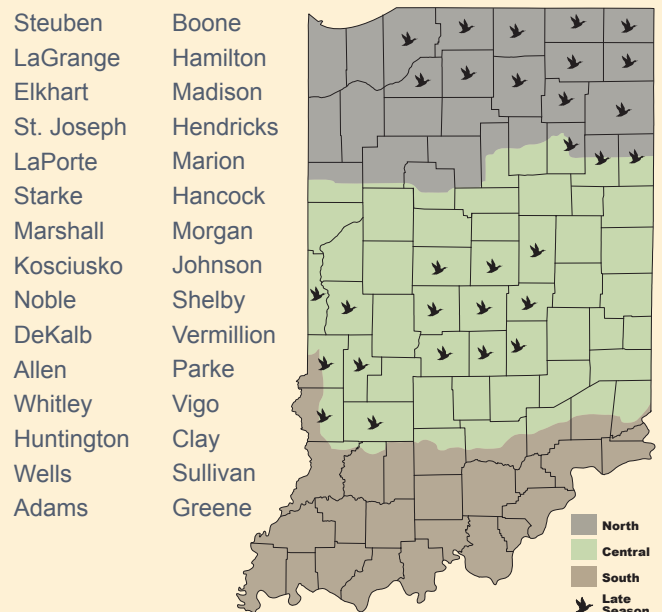
Central Zone

That part of Indiana south of the North Zone boundary and north of the South Zone boundary.

South Zone

That part of Indiana south of a line extending east from the Illinois border along U.S. 40; south along U.S. 41; east along State Road 58; south along State Road 37 to Bedford; and east along U.S. 50 to the Ohio border.

LATE CANADA GOOSE SEASON COUNTIES



YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNTING WEEKENDS

Three weekends (one in each zone, see page 1 for dates) are set outside the regular hunting-season dates to provide a quality hunting experience for young hunters.

Hunters must be 15 years of age or younger and properly licensed to participate, and must be accompanied by an adult at least 18 years of age. An adult may accompany more than one youth. The licensed accompanying adult may not hunt waterfowl. If the accompanying adult does not intend to hunt and does not possess a firearm, the adult does not need to be licensed. Bag and species limits are the same as those allowed in the regular season.

For more information, visit hunting.IN.gov.

2015-2016 INDIANA WATERFOWL REGULATIONS

LICENSE & STAMP REQUIREMENTS

Anyone hunting migratory game birds (ducks, coots, geese, mergansers, doves, snipe, sora rail or woodcock) must have an Indiana hunting license and a HIP registration number. An Indiana waterfowl stamp privilege, purchased through a local retailer, is also required for hunting ducks and geese. The waterfowl stamp privilege is covered under the resident youth consolidated hunting/trapping license, but non-resident youth must purchase the Indiana waterfowl stamp privilege and hunting license. There must be an original signature, in ink, on the license on which the stamp privilege is issued. Commemorative (traditional) waterfowl stamps do not convey hunting privileges. Additionally, anyone 16 years old or older must have a signed federal duck stamp when hunting ducks and geese. Landowners or lessees, hunting on farmed land they own or lease, must obtain a HIP registration number and have a federal duck stamp when hunting waterfowl.

For a list of Indiana Outdoor license retailer locations, or to purchase licenses and stamp privileges online, go to IndianaOutdoor.IN.gov. For more information, call the Indiana DNR Customer Service Center at (317) 232-4200. You can order federal duck stamps by calling 1-800-782-6724 or by going to www.fws.gov/duckstamps.

HARVEST INFORMATION PROGRAM (HIP)

Licensed hunters in Indiana must register each year with the National Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP) before they hunt ducks, geese, mergansers, coots, doves, snipe, sora rail or woodcock.

In order to register, hunters must visit hunting.IN.gov and click on "HIP Registration" or call 1-866-671-4499 and provide the information requested. The average time it takes to register is less than five minutes. At the end of the registration, the hunter is given a validation number to record on his or her license. This number is valid from the date of registration through the close of the last migratory bird hunting season. Lifetime license holders and persons on military leave must also register with HIP. Resident landowners and tenants who hunt on their own land also must register with HIP.

Hunters need only to register once each season in each state in which they hunt, not each time they hunt. In addition to providing name and address during the call, hunters are asked questions designed to identify which species they hunted last year and, in some cases, the number of birds they harvested.

HIP is a joint effort between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state wildlife agencies. The program improves harvest estimates for migratory game birds nationwide. Once the harvest information is gathered, the information is used by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the states to ensure that decisions regarding hunting seasons are soundly based on scientific evidence.

SHELL CAPACITY LIMIT

It is illegal to hunt migratory birds (ducks, geese, coots, mergansers, doves, woodcock, sora rails or snipe) with a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler that cannot be removed without disassembling the gun. It is illegal to use a shotgun larger than 10 gauge.

SHOOTING HOURS

Shooting hours for geese and ducks are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Shooting hours may vary at some DNR properties. Check property regulations before hunting.

NON-TOXIC SHOT REQUIREMENTS

Hunters are required to use approved non-toxic shot while hunting all waterfowl. As of this printing, non-toxic shots currently approved for use by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are bismuth-tin, tungsten-iron (two types), tungsten-polymer, tungsten-matrix, tungsten-bronze, tungsten-tin-bismuth, tungsten-tin-iron-nickel, tungsten-nickel-iron, tungsten-iron-copper-nickel, tungsten-tin-iron and steel shot. Copper-plated, zinc chromate-plated, zinc chloride-plated and nickel-plated steel shot is approved as long as the plating represents less than one percent of the shot's weight. Lead shot plated with copper, nickel or other material does not qualify. It is illegal to possess shells loaded with anything other than approved non-toxic shot while hunting ducks, geese and coots anywhere in the state. Additional shot restrictions may be in place at select state Fish and Wildlife areas. For details, check with the property where you plan to hunt.

HUNTING FROM A BOAT

Migratory game birds may be hunted from a motorboat provided it is beached, resting at anchor, tied to a stationary object, or without motion other than that imparted by wind and current acting upon the hull, or due to hand-operated oars or paddles.

IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

While in the field or traveling from the field to your home, migratory game birds in your possession must have one fully feathered wing or head attached to the carcass for identification purposes.

HUNTING ON STATE PROPERTIES

Be sure to check at area headquarters concerning open hunting areas and other special regulations that are in effect on all Fish and Wildlife areas and Reservoirs.

Reserved waterfowl hunts will be held at Goose Pond, Kankakee, LaSalle, Willow Slough, Kingsbury, and Hovey Lake Fish and Wildlife areas, Brookville and Monroe Reservoirs, and Province Pond WCA.

For more information regarding reserved hunts, go to <http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/5834.htm>.

WANTON WASTE

All migratory game birds killed or crippled shall be retrieved, if possible, and retained in the custody of the hunter in the field. You may retrieve dead or injured birds by hand or from a motorboat under power, but crippled birds may not be shot from a boat under power or in motion due to motor power.

2015-2016 INDIANA WATERFOWL REGULATIONS

TAGGING REQUIREMENTS

No person shall give, put or leave any migratory game birds at any place or in the custody of another person unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information:

- The hunter's signature
- The hunter's address
- The total number of birds involved by species
- The dates such birds were killed

No person or business shall receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another person unless such birds are properly tagged.

RESTRICTIONS

No person shall take migratory game birds:

- With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10 gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fish hook, poison, drug, explosive or stupefying substance.
- From a sink box (a low, floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water).
- From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance, or any aircraft, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may take from any stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance.
- By the use or aid of live decoys. All live, tame or captive ducks and geese shall be removed for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting, and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such tame birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.
- By driving, rallying or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or any sail boat to put them in the range of the hunters.
- By the aid of baiting, or on or over any baited area, if the person knows or reasonably should know that the area is baited. Baiting includes the placing of corn, wheat or other grain, salt, or other feed to serve as a lure or attraction for migratory game birds to, on, or over areas where hunters are attempting to take them. It is a separate offense to place or direct placement of bait on or adjacent to an area for the purpose of causing or allowing hunters to take or attempt to take birds by the aid of bait or over a baited area. A baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after complete removal of any bait. The maximum federal penalties are: for hunting over bait: \$15,000/six months jail; placing bait: \$100,000/one year jail.
- With a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler, incapable of removal without disassembling the gun, so its total capacity does not exceed three shells.
- By the use or aid of recorded or electrically amplified bird calls or sounds, or recorded or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls or sounds.

OHIO RIVER REGULATIONS

Indiana waterfowlers must have an Indiana hunting license and appropriate stamps and hunt only when the waterfowl season is open in Indiana when hunting on the Indiana shoreline of the Ohio River, including tributaries and embayments. Hunting from the mainstem (only) of the Ohio River can be with either state's hunting license and appropriate stamp(s) and must be during the open season in the state for which you are licensed. A person hunting on the Ohio River in Kentucky embayments, tributaries, islands, and on the Kentucky shoreline must have a Kentucky hunting license and appropriate stamp(s) and hunt only when the waterfowl season is open in Kentucky.

SHIPPING MIGRATORY BIRDS

No person shall ship migratory game birds unless the package is marked on the outside with: (a) the name and address of the person sending the birds, (b) the name and address of the person to whom the birds are being sent, and (c) the number of birds, by species, contained in the package.

REPORT BIRD BANDS

All waterfowl hunters are urged to report bird bands online or at the toll-free number below. During the hunting season, operators are on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Band information is critical to the management of waterfowl populations and assists biologists in providing optimum hunting opportunities.

1-800-327-BAND or www.reportband.gov

Report any geese that you harvest or see with orange or white plastic leg bands to the same number as above, or to any Fish and Wildlife area. These birds were moved from urban areas to Indiana Fish and Wildlife areas. Reporting these bands helps us determine what happens to these birds after they are moved.

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